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Hey Buffs,

The fall semester flew by, and our precious winter break is over. Now, it's time to push through the spring. Whether you have nine credits or 18 on the schedule this semester, be sure to make time for the things you love in the next four months. Love to ski? Hit the slopes. Love music? Learn an instrument. Sick of your Netflix lineup? Try making videos of your own.

The point is, the spring semester slump is all too real. But there are ways to push through these final months before summertime. We're at this university to find our passions and set ourselves up for the rest of our lives. So set goals for yourself beyond your GPA. Find something to look forward to. And don't forget each other. On a campus this large, it's easy to feel alone in your stress and struggles. Let's look out for our fellow Buffs, and protect the herd.

And for those of you graduating in May, don't waste the time you have left on the most beautiful campus in America! Regardless of the gold stars or demerits on your college career, you are always in control of the future. Work hard, be nice, say "yes" when opportunity knocks, and most importantly, have some fun this spring.

— Jordyn Siemens, Content Editor, Syllabus

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[How to] Make 2016 Great.

This semester, check out these columns, stories and graphics to help you navigate your way through the new year – from us to you.

Life 101: Resolutions for the college student

*by Ellis Arnold,
Editorial Manager*

We've all heard it before: college is, supposedly, going to be "the best four years of your life." I suspect that amidst the mountains of homework, finals anxiety and your roommate's socks constantly ending up on your side of the room, you've probably reconsidered how truthful that prediction really is.

But whether college turns out to be the best time of your life or not (and I'm going to err on the side of "not" — do we really want to be peaking at age 22?), what is undoubtedly true is that these four years are one of the most important transitional periods of our lives.

Not only are we going through crazy changes damn near every week — leaving friends, severing ties, forging our identities and facing new social pressures — we're also going through very real psychological changes, and perhaps spiritual ones, too.

In our society, we've typically thought of "adult" as meaning 18 years old (because of things like the voting age and high school graduation), or 21 years old (because of the drinking age). Until about two decades ago, even psychologists thought of adulthood as beginning at 18.

But that's not quite accurate, especially in modern times: we're really

in what's called "emerging adulthood," a kind of in-between phase in life.

Adulthood just doesn't feel like something we're all-the-way in right now, and that's natural. Coming into adulthood isn't the same as it used to be. More than ever, people our age are having to make the abrupt transition between living in familiar places surrounded by distractions (social media, Snapchat, desperately trying to keep up with the Kardashians) and little responsibility, to being thrown into a world where it seems like everything is on our shoulders, and it's all hitting at once.

It's safe to say there's never been more pressure to succeed in college, to do more, to know where you're going. And, on top of that, to maintain some of your sanity and like, have a somewhat normal social life.

In the middle of all this confusion is where New Year's resolutions come in. This is a time of growing self-awareness in our lives, and with everything that's on your plate, it almost goes without saying that you're going to feel the need to make some changes.

Maybe you're not satisfied with your grades, or your friendships, your relationships or the goals you're setting. Maybe you just feel like



Students walk past the recently completed Kitteredge Central residence hall on Sept. 3, 2013. (James Bradbury/CU Independent)

you need to get your shit together. (Spoiler alert: the other 29,999 of us probably feel the same way, in some regard.)

The thing about making change, especially in this transient, hectic, undefined time in our lives, is that you're gonna have to roll with the punches.

If this sounds like you, you should understand that it's okay to feel frazzled or all over the place. Psychology also tells us that the brain doesn't fully develop until somewhere in your mid-20s — and that means our decision-making skills and ability to regulate our emotions doesn't either. We're still figuring things out, and that's okay.

In the middle of my freshman year, when I came home for winter break I couldn't tell you how relieved I was to get out of here, at least for a while — I was doing well on grades, but it always felt like I was getting through by the skin of my teeth.

On top of all the stress and being alone most of the time (or at least feeling like it), I was finding it hard to be comfortable interacting with people, something that should be simple, I thought. I was also feeling absolutely inept at trying to have any kind of "dating" life (note the quotation marks here) and I

if I could just believe in it hard enough, it would happen. I told myself to Not Be Afraid — I still write it out capitalized now — and told myself I'd commit to it.

LIFE 101

Ellis Arnold writes the "Life 101" advice column for the CUI. (Josh Shettler/CU Independent)

How'd it turn out when I got back? There was some progress, sure. Spring semester actually brought on some extremely difficult personal obstacles that I had to face, and I pushed through it — I didn't run and hide like I might have so many other times in my life. And that's what it was really about, as dramatic as it sounds: not backing down, not doubting yourself. In whatever context it came.

But now, two years later, I expected to be different. I look at myself, and I haven't pulled a 180°. Truth be told, I probably haven't even pulled a 90°. But the thing about making change, especially in this transient, hectic, undefined time in our lives, is that you're gonna have to roll with the punches. You've gotta juggle. It's one step forward and two steps back sometimes, but you've gotta forgive yourself if you can't snap your fingers and be where you want to be. We're not only searching for who we want to be, we're searching for the road that leads us there — and that's the hardest part.

When there's no stability behind you and no net underneath you, you often end up being the one who has to pick yourself up. And it's not always going to be pretty — but you're getting there, and you'll get there, wherever it is you're trying to go.

And after all this time, am I the confident, fearless person I've envi-



A student sits down with friends during International Coffee Hour at the UMC. (Calyx Ward/CU Independent)

needed a change.

So, fast forward to New Year's Eve — I was lying in bed and I had a strong feeling, something that turned into my resolution. I wrote some notes out on my phone, sitting there in the dark, my mind racing, like

Girl on Girl: What kind of girl?

by Dani Pinkus,
Opinion Columnist

Become a gym go-er, spend more time with family, eat healthier, get outside more — whatever it is, we all set some kind of New Year's goal. But as your "Girl on Girl" columnist, I want to encourage you to think of what kind of girl you want to be in 2016 and the ways you can make a positive step in your girl-on-girl relationships.

As women of the world, we have a lot of cleaning up to do, and I'm not talking about your kitchen. I'm concerned with what expectations have been put on women historically, and more importantly, how we can better our own lives and each other's in the future. And that's important, says this writer, because we're making a lot of simple mistakes.

So this January, reflect back on the woman you were this past year, and the actions you might consider taking a bit differently in this new year.



Dani Pinkus writes the "Girl on Girl" column on feminism and women's advice for the CUI. (Grayson Bender/CU Independent)

Consider:

Taking a class that sparks your interest, rather than a class that will boost your GPA.

Push yourself! Come on, you know you can do it. You're here to learn a thing or two, after all. You are so much more interesting and fabulous than a baseline requirement. Don't settle for what all your sorority sisters signed up for if that's not what excites you.

With electives, you have the opportunity to take a break from your major and learn about something new. Try an art history course, a business class or even journalism. Maybe you'll try something outside of your field that could complement it. Explore your interests from a different perspective.

Making a move on that chem lab crush, instead of waiting around for signals.

You are a catch and a half. Stop waiting for the apple of your eye to make the moves! Encourage yourself to step out of your comfort (gendered) zone and put yourself out there with the one you've been making eyes at all year. Worst case, your ego gets a little hurt and you move on. It's the same risk you expect them to take, so why not take it yourself? You are intelligent, interesting and vivacious. Put yourself out there in 2016.

Get involved, and no more sulking.

Between hourly jobs, internships, class and your social life, frustrations can be an everyday occurrence. Sometimes it feels like there is little you can do, but why not channel your "ugh" moments into passion? Find an outlet. Mine is writing, and yours may be anything — a quick scroll through the Center for Student Involvement's student organization directory could point you to a community where you can surround yourself with like-minded, and similarly moti-

vated, people.

So get involved and let your voice be heard. Turn your complaints into actions. And if what you care about doesn't already have a specific outlet, make one. You can do it, girl.

Being more trusting, and trustworthy.

I know it's hard. Do it anyway. If you want to be the kind of person that someone else trusts, you must be trusting as well. Encourage yourself to stop spilling people's secrets, to listen with gratitude and an open heart, and to share honestly.

If and when you are feeling uneasy about a relationship of any kind, confront the issues instead of gossiping or snooping. Trust your own capacity for leading productive conversations, and encourage your most important people to do so too.

Protecting your body, and the bodies of your sisters.

You only have one of you, so why not hold yourself to a higher importance this year? Don't take yourself for granted, and do not allow anyone to treat you than less your worth. Protect your body, be safe, guard your heart, value your soul, all that jazz.

Your responsibility does not stop at your own self, but the bodies of your sisters as well. Encourage your girlfriends to also engage in safe sex, to take that pregnancy test, to get tested for STIs, to be active, to treat themselves and so on. Be there for them as you would expect them to be there for you. Don't let a topic go undiscussed. Hold their hand, be a friend and expect the same support in return. Your body is too important. Do not let you or your sisters forget it.

Loving yourself a little bit more.

Spend time with yourself this year. What do you need? How can you best help yourself? If you can't do it all, ask for help. Take your time. Remove "I can't," or "I'll try" from your vocabulary. You can. You will. And so can your girls — spread support rather than a sour attitude. Remember: We're all just trying our best.

Despite my advice, making 2016 a great year comes down to what actions you are willing to take in the world of girls. The point is, women are each other's greatest assets. We need each other to make a better world for girls, and it starts with bettering your girl-on-girl relationships. Let's get to work.



About 400 protesters march up Broadway in December 2014 in protest of killings by police officers in Ferguson, Missouri and New York. (Matt Sisneros/CU Independent)

Dear Domna: New Year for America

*by Domna Dali,
Opinion Columnist*

I think it's safe to say that 2015 was not our best year, America. According to The Guardian, as of December 2015, the total count of people killed by police in the United States was 1,007, which is only expected to grow as the year goes on.

We've heard of the seemingly unjust death of Freddie Gray, the fatal shooting of Michael Brown by Darren Wilson, which caused riots in Ferguson, Missouri this past year and the mysterious death of Sandra Bland that followed the unnecessary violence a cop used toward her. In addition, despite gay marriage becoming legal in 2015, Kim Davis, a county clerk in Kentucky, denied marriage-licenses to same sex couples because of her own religious beliefs. As of Oct. 10, there were 52 school shootings in the U.S.

We're also still struggling with reproductive rights for women — the battle between Republicans in Congress and Planned Parenthood, and recent terrorism against the organization in Colorado Springs — and understanding the true notion of feminism and equality as a whole. In 2015, The Food and Drug Administration approved OxyContin, an opioid painkiller that acts on the brain like heroin, for children as young as 11 years old. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every day in the United States, 44 people die as a result of prescription painkiller overdose. Despite spending millions on the War on Drugs every year, our government allows us to consume carcinogenic preservatives, chemicals, additives, and high fructose corn syrup and trans fats in everyday food items.

What have we let happen?

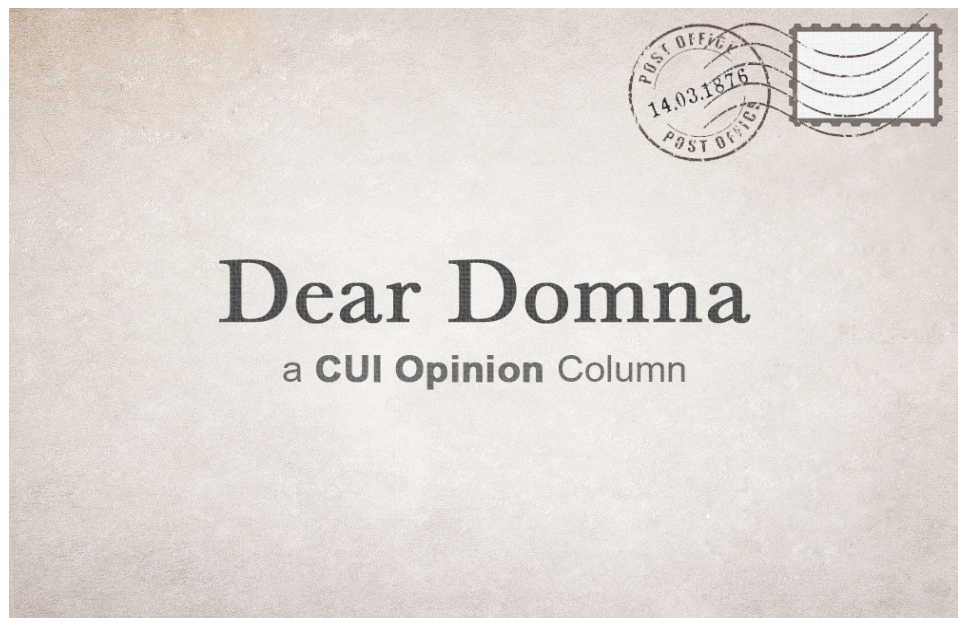
The same people who are fighting for guns to be legal are fighting for abortion to be illegal because... murder? Marijuana use has been opposed for negative impacts on learning and memory, yet we plant our kids in front of a TV and advertise the newest episode on the Kardashian family, who are famous for reasons I am not able to put my finger on.

Are we living in one giant paradox, America?

When it comes to hatred in this country, let's zoom in on a more local scale. An African-American University of Colorado-Boulder student, Aaron Montgomery, spoke to me about the hatred he has endured in his lifetime for the color of his skin. He mentioned how he could have gotten a D-I football scholarship at another college, yet transferred back to CU because of how racist people acted towards him. He and his family would normally get stared at, screamed out, and harassed for the way that they looked. He decided that living in a place without that kind

of ignorance meant more to him than a free college tuition.

And it's not just one group — every demographic has endured inequality in some way. As a young woman, I have been physically and verbally harassed by men I have never met before in my life. I have been physically assaulted for the time I stood up for myself after a random, drunk guy screamed at some girls and myself, calling us “whores” and “sluts.”



Domna Dali writes the “Dear Domna” advice and reflection column for the CUI. (Grayson Bender/CU Independent)

In October 2015, an extremist Christian group came to CU’s University Memorial Center’s “free speech zone” and a man by the name of Joshua had the audacity to call every girl at CU, including myself, “a whore,” stated that “a black woman’s uterus is the most dangerous area for a child,” “everything he needed to learn about Islam he learned on 9-11” and “women weren’t allowed to speak.”

This ignorance cannot be perpetuated any longer. Something needs to change.

Racism, prejudice and inequality is from our parents’ and grandparents’ age. It’s outdated, irrational thinking. Soon, when some of us will be having children, we don’t want to have to worry about them getting harassed for their ethnicity, sexuality, gender or appearance.

We don’t want to have to worry about our children’s schools being shot up, police treat-

ing our children unfairly, or people and employers discriminating against our children for things out of their control. We don’t want our children to worry about if what they are eating is going to cause them cancer or add

Soon, when some of us will be having children, we don’t want to have to worry about them getting harassed for their ethnicity, sexuality, gender or appearance.

toxic chemicals to their bodies. We don’t want to have to worry about people being killed at health clinics, or women being denied the right to make their own health care decisions. We don’t want to have to worry about the media feeding our children negative images and role models that will in no way better themselves or the world.

Our generation needs to realize the potential we have. Before we know it, it’s going to be us who are running governments, companies, schools, media platforms, and essentially the world. If we don’t want these problems anymore, we can do something about it. It needs to start with us changing our mindset.

We need to cut the hate and have more compassion for one another, as equals. We need to love more, empathize more, reach out more, and bring each other up more instead of pushing each other down. We need to question everything. Question the media, authority, rules, laws and everything we’ve been told to believe and practice. If something doesn’t seem like it’s working, question why it is the way it is and who made it the way it is and what we can do to change it.

We are a special generation who sees things in a different light than those who came before us. More than ever, we can pick out our societal flaws — and we are capable of changing the system. Let’s start putting our open minds to work! Let’s decide to stay informed, stay aware, stay positive and make 2016 a better year all around.



Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains in Boulder. (Will McKay/CU Independent)

GLBTQ at CU: Finding the community

by Max Sendor,
Opinion Columnist

In the past few years, the climate for the LGBT community has changed greatly, allowing for much more equality.

Last June, the U.S. Supreme Court declared marriage equality for the entire country. Despite this, there are still many times when LGBT folks are marginalized and discriminated against.

As someone who is a part of the LGBT community, this weighed heavily on me when looking for a college to attend. The area that I'm from wasn't overtly homophobic but still had underlying, oppressive opinions that made me uncomfortable.

I wanted to find a school that would allow me to feel comfortable and not have to deal with this issue in the same way I did in high school.

When I looked at CU as a prospective school, I wasn't sure about where it fell from the LGBT perspective, so I decided to look up how it fared. I found that it performed fairly well across different websites and, in the past year, CU has even been put on the top lists for some websites, such as campuspride.org. Af-

ter seeing reviews like that, I felt comfortable going here.

Now, having spent two years here, I want to note my top five ways that I think CU is LGBT friendly.

1) The Gender and Sexuality Center

When first arriving on campus, many freshman may feel aimless as to where they can meet people; for someone in the LGBT community, go ahead and add "people who accept them" into the mix.

The Gender and Sexuality Center, formerly known as the GLBTQ Resource Center, is a great place to start. It is located in the Center for Community (C4C), on the fourth floor. The entrance is adorned with a rainbow pride flag, making it hard to miss. There are nice couches, a computer lab with free printing, a library of LGBT-themed books and movies and an overall welcoming environment that makes it easy to talk with other, like-minded people. It's run by Scarlet Bowen and Morgan Seamont, who can provide great support and advice on college as an LGBT student.

Right down the hall is also a state-of-the-art, gender-neutral bathroom that allows ev-

eryone to feel comfortable. Whether you want to meet new people or find great a break from class, the Gender and Sexuality Center is a great place to find support and community. For more information, go to www.colorado.edu/glbtrc/.

2) The wide variety of LGBT student groups on campus

After going to the Gender and Sexuality center, the next thing to look for are the student groups geared towards LGBT students. While other clubs and activities may be LGBT-friendly, these are created to build support for all different facets of the LGBT community.

From the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) to Biphoria to QTPOC (Queer and Trans People of Boulder), there is bound to be a group that supports your identity. The GSA puts on an annual drag show, which is the largest student-run production on campus; the show draws about 800 to 1000 people each year. A majority of these programs and groups are run through the resource center, so they will have the best information about what student groups and activities are offered at CU.



3) Spectrum floor, Hallett Hall

The Spectrum floor is a special program within CU's dorms that's specific to LGBT issues, located in Hallett Hall, across from the C4C.

The floor offers a focus on LGBT issues and explores the depth of



CU GLBTQ buttons. At the UMC in March 2012, there was a statewide convention concerning LGBT youth. (Robert R. Denton/CU Independent File)

the human condition as it relates to sexual orientation in an academic setting. It offers a variety of social and educational activities, including activities with CU faculty and staff, field trips and an introduction to LGBT studies academic courses.

The Spectrum living area has gender-neutral bathrooms, which create greater access and privacy for those who might be uncomfortable with using gendered bathrooms. This is great for anyone looking to build a friend group and community that is LGBT-specific. It allows for residents to not worry about issues around sexual orientation with the peers that they live with.

4) Out Boulder

Out Boulder is another great resource for everyone in Boulder, and not just CU students. It's located just north of Pearl Street on 14th Street. It offers a lot of awesome programming for all LGBT folks and creates a safe space for anyone in the Boulder area to hang out. These range from youth groups to trans support groups to groups designed to help people through the coming out process. Out Boulder also is the organization that hosts Boulder Pridefest every September. It offers great support and creates a space to both meet LGBT folks and build a community for all of Boulder, not just CU.

5) Liberal atmosphere

As a whole, the CU-Boulder campus is largely liberal. In a recent campus climate survey, more than 75 percent of the LGBT students who responded said that CU has a welcoming climate for all sexual and gender orientations. This may not be so true in sports and Greek life, though. In my experience, the student body taken as a whole is very supportive of LGBT students. While my experience may not reflect all LGBT students' experiences, I have seen that CU is an LGBT-friendly university.

Exploring New Music

Trying out heavy metal

by Thomas Roller,
Entertainment Writer

With the arrival of the new year, it's a perfect time to broaden your music horizons — so we're talking about one of the least approached genres there is.

If music is a map, then many people regard the genre of heavy metal as a small, inhospitable island with the legend "Here be monsters" inscribed next to it. Many music fans say that heavy metal is inaccessible, or just not for them, but is this the right atti-

emotion of the lyrical content. It's by no means a requirement, but in some cases it just fits the lyrics. It also matches the intensity of the instrumentation, creating a more uniform sound. Some bands do benefit from the juxtaposition of the sound that "clean" vocals provide. It really just boils down to artistic choice. Put it this way: would you ask someone why their favorite artist had to sing all the time?

Metal is inherently aggressive — to say otherwise is to lie. But why is this aggression considered

There is a vocal minority of fans in the metal world who react poorly to their genre of choice being passed over.

tude to take? Again, if music is a map, should all its different corners not be explored? Should we shy away from trying something new, even if it seems intimidating or off-putting at first? Let's wade out to these dangerous waters and try to shatter some preconceived notions.

One of the most common barriers to entry in heavy metal is the vocals. "It's just screaming," is a depressingly common sentiment, and even if it is an exaggeration, it ends up developing a bad attitude about the genre. It gives the idea that metal is senselessly angry, which is not true. Heavy metal has lyrics, and they are as varied as in any other genre, telling stories with themes including pain, loss, anger, fantastical worlds, spirituality and politics. Yes, politics. Megadeth's *Rust in Peace* is one long treatise against war and the religious and political ideologies causing it. Not to mention, their vocals are sung rather than screamed, which is the case for a lot of metal artists.

When the vocals are screamed, it's purposeful. It conveys the raw

a bad thing? The fast drums, distorted guitars, ragged vocals and thunderous sound can all serve as a form of catharsis in these stressful times. Many people use heavy metal as workout music. It can also serve as a mental and emotional workout.

One of the biggest barriers for newcomers of the genre? Some of the fans. There is a vocal minority of fans in the metal world who react poorly to their genre of choice being passed over. They attack other artists and come across as elitist. The best thing for a newcomer to do is to ignore them, and to listen to what you like. You know, like with any other kind of music.

This article isn't remotely long enough to properly address any of these issues, but hopefully it will at least encourage some readers to get into some research. Ask your metalhead friend for some recommendations. See if they'll introduce you to the genre. Metal is a glorious celebration of symphonic technical ability and primal catharsis, and everyone should be able to enjoy it. At least

Passing judgment on freshman year



*by Emily McPeak,
Assistant Opinion Editor*

A freshman class looks down in a lecture class in Duane Physics on October 12, 2010.
(Eric McCune /CU Independent File)

Growing up, we're told to never judge a book by its cover. Parents, teachers and mentors alike offer these wise words of advice, cautioning us to not be too quick to judge and to never dismiss a person or an experience outright. While this is meant with good intentions, it ignores a natural truth. As human beings, we are inherently judgmental.

In a world where individuals are accosted with more information in a second than their brain could comprehend in a lifetime, making judgments is only natural. Yet we ignore this reality in order to idealize ourselves as unbiased. We are conditioned to deny our gut reactions to the world around us, but these are the very things we must embrace.

As a freshman that moved halfway across the country to attend school at CU, I have recently experienced the power of first impressions. The first week of my new life here, I had to rely on these reactions in order to make it through each day. As I moved from one welcome event to another, if I did not judge the people I met and the places I went to, I would not have been able to learn the academic and social environment I was joining.

Starting college is a turbulent experience in its own right, and the only way to get through it is to let yourself judge. There is no other way to develop a personal, working knowledge of what the school has to offer academically and socially. Embrace your gut reactions, but then move on from them.

When school first began, I was the classic, overwhelmed freshman who barely got to classes on time. Somehow I made my way to each one, and without fail immediately judged the professors, my peers and the course content as it was presented in the syllabus. In a matter of minutes, I determined whether the class would be something I would enjoy attending, something that would pose an academic challenge or something I would dread going to for the entire semester.

One class in particular stands out in my memory due to my desire to

drop it as soon as I entered the room on the first day. There is nothing that can explain my initial reaction to this class, but I had a gut feeling it was not something I wanted to continue taking. I decided to give it a week, and if I still had this feeling I would drop the class.

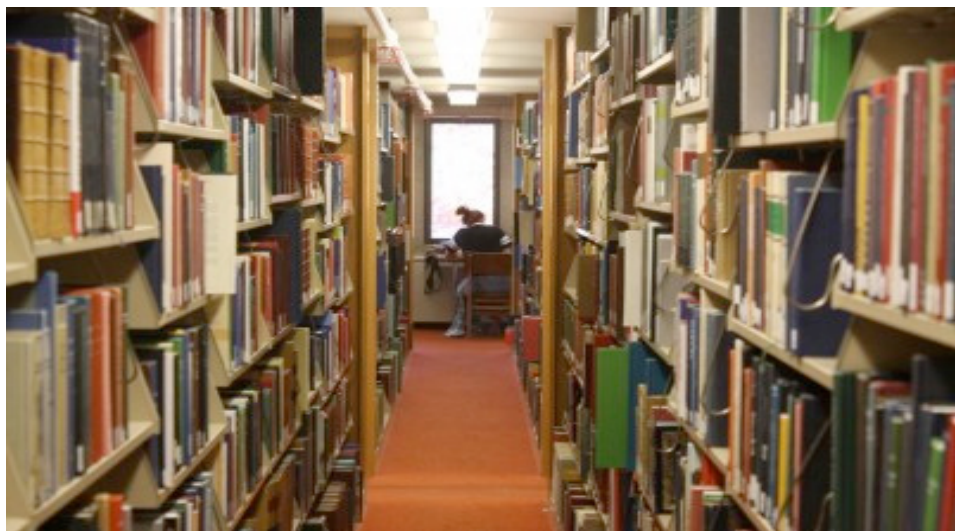
After a week, I realized my reaction had been completely misguided. The course is now one of my favorites to attend, and the subject is one I hope to continue studying. If I had not acknowledged my gut reaction to the class, I would have never been able to experience the course. I would have denied that I was judging it at all, and likely would have found some other way to justify dropping it. By embracing my initial reaction, I was able to move past it.

Going into the second semester of college, I recognize the ways in which I judged the school and the people I met here during my first few weeks as a member of the Boulder community. Some of these first impressions were more or less right, but others were proved shockingly wrong. While it is troubling to know that I could have missed out on a person or experience because I made an incorrect assumption about them or it, I was able to make up for these lost opportunities. By going out and actually experiencing life at CU, I was able to move past my initial reactions to it.

Refusing to let your judgments limit your experiences is not an easy thing to do. It requires entering situations you think you may not enjoy, and in general embracing feeling uncomfortable from time to time. If you want to gain the most from your time here in Boulder, or anywhere else for that matter, you must consciously decide that you will not allow your initial reactions to dictate your life.

So go and talk to that person down the hall, even though they seemed a little standoffish during that "get to know you" activity on move-in day. Check out that club you heard about at the student involvement fair, even though some of the members came across as a bit intense.

They say to never judge a book by its cover; I say to judge the book, but then open it and start reading.



A student studies at Norlin Library during finals week. (Rachel Ramberg/CU Independent)

I thought I had survived the worst of the “What are your plans next year?” questions after my senior year of high school, but damn, was I wrong. At least then I had an answer. Now, when people ask me about post-grad plans, I awkwardly waffle between “I have no idea” and “probably nothing,” while the inquisitors mask their disapproval.

I’ve found that the best response in these delightful interactions is to make them uncomfortable. “I’m actually gonna be an exotic dancer in Brazil,” or, “Oh next year? Yeah, I have a whole five-year-plan to build a Lego city.” It keeps me on my toes.

When I realized how much worse this four-year anniversary of absolute uncertainty was than the last, I became instantly frustrated, because I once had a definite plan for my post-grad years — acting school, casting calls, Broadway performances, hot movie star husband and piles of cash to swim in when I wasn’t in my infinity pool. Fast-forward three years and I’m an international affairs and political science major who wants to get paid to eat nachos.

My first vision of my future emerged in kindergarten, but what happened to all of that creativity between elementary school and college? I used to have far more exciting dreams. Childhood engaged my creativity, and that’s when I imagined a future filled with stages and co-stars and standing ovations.

Now our generation, myself included, is obsessed with resumes and job security. Once we were told to color within the lines, we left our creativity behind. Public school is the culprit, having systematically beat us into cookie-cutter molds of students.

Since childhood, we’ve been churned through the public school system. It works to include everyone and treat them all the same; hoping to get at-risk students into better academic positions, while simultaneously supporting the overachievers.

Public school has created standardized ideas of success. We’re told there’s one right answer — going to a four year college, and anything else is failure. Visual learners aren’t catered to, and if you don’t test well, then too bad. Teachers replace our faces with benchmark test results, SAT scores and GPAs.

It’s all about numbers — get the most kids into college, get the highest national ratings, and produce the highest grade averages. They claim that they want us to succeed, to go forward and do great things. I call bullshit. They’re done with us after we go to college, but we’re the ones who actually have to navigate the future.

I’m not on my own here, either. Organizations like United Opt Out and FairTest combat the oppression of the standardized testing that caters to the No Child Left Behind initiative. Those organizations provide information and resources for parents on how to exempt their children from standardized tests. But this approach avoids the problem, rather than solving it. Most school students are still taking these tests, unaware of the detriment to their future.

Before college, I hadn’t been encouraged to think creatively and critically since elementary school. High school was a creative dry spell, and the fact that all the answers were very cut-and-dry meant that analysis didn’t even enter the picture. I couldn’t think for myself.

When I got to college and professors would ask me analytical questions, I couldn’t come up with a single answer. When other students answered, I couldn’t imagine having ever drawn a

Breaking out of the public school box

by Maggie Wagner,
Features Editor

conclusion that well thought-out. Where were the easy answers with no ambiguity or room for interpretation?

It was a beautiful, newly terrifying world, and I was totally unprepared. It took a long time for me to learn that it was acceptable to have my own opinion. So, it’s easy to imagine that being unprepared to be creative in class would leave me unprepared to think creatively about my future.

I can’t remember the last time I actually thought of a “dream job” that didn’t make me nearly die of boredom. We’re programmed to think of the next step in terms of what we’re expected to do, seeing as up until now every next step has been predetermined for us.

How do we get back to being six years old and actually believing we could be astronauts and actors? We watch people doing it in the real world, but see them as the exception, because we’ve been told to keep it realistic. Realism has become synonymous with boring, money-making, sorry excuses for dreams. Graduate school doesn’t have to be the answer, and you don’t have to choose a major just because you think it’ll make you money.

We don’t need to know what we want to do with our lives right now. But it sucks to feel like we’re backtracking because the wonderful imagination-filled world of kindergarten was completely abandoned when we got to high school. I’m not saying we need to break out the finger paints, but there isn’t just one way to learn, and there isn’t just one way to succeed.

I’m still holding on to the pool dream, and maybe even the movie star husband. While I

The CU's Guide to Campus Groups

Academics

Alpha Epsilon Delta
Chi Beta Phi
Neuroscience Club
Eta Sigma Phi
Golden Key Int'l Honor Society
Honors Journal
Order of Omega

For a full
directory of
student organizations,
visit
<http://sofo.colorado.edu/>.

Art | Music | Film

CU Ceramics Guild
Figure Drawing Club
Photographic Artists of CU
In the Buff
Buffoons | Jam Society
Music Industry Club | Radio 1190
Extreme Measures
Boulder Blues
Verve Hip-Hop

Sports

Backcountry Club
Boulder Freeride
Climbing Team | Ski Racing
Trail Team | Flow Arts
Folsom Frenzy | Powerlifting
Shooting Sports | Skydiving Club
Slackers | Yoga Club
Club Sports
Intramural Sports

Alliances | Politics

Bridge CU | African Student Association
AID Colorado | American Civil Liberties Union
Be the Match On Campus | Boulder A.S.S.E.T.S.
Boulder Open Square | Boulder Students for Hillary
The Ability Experience | Buffs for Bernie
Buffs Israel Public Affairs Committee | College Democrats
College Republicans | New Era Colorado
Student Voices Count
Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance | UGGS

Service

Food Recovery Network
Challah for Hunger Boulder
Global Medical Brigades
Student Worker Alliance Program
Hike to Help CU ICO
Habitat for Humanity
Rotaract at CU
Timmy Global Health

Engineering | Business

BUFE, Vex Robotics at CU
Bridges to Prosperity | Game Developers Club
Real Estate Club | DECA
Delta Sigma Pi | Alpha Kappa Psi
Athletic Business Club | International Business Club
Women in Computing | Design Build Fly
Engineering for Developing Communities
Biomedical Engineering Society
Engineers Without Borders | Ethical Hacking
HackCU | Makers Collective
STEMinar
Engineering Council | Leeds Ambassadors
Multicultural Business Students Association

Greek Life

CU Sorority Chapters:
<http://www.colorado.edu/greeks/panhellenic-sororities>

CU Fraternity Chapters:
<http://coloradoifc.org/>

Local Band Spotlight

by Sydney Worth, News Staff

Colorado houses a rich collection of bands unique from the more mainstream artists that populate the local radio stations. If you're looking for new music, it'd be worth looking in your own backyard. Here are some bands to ease you into the local music scene.

Shady Elders

Listening to this Denver-based band is a dreamy, out-of-body experience.

Lead singer Fox Rodemich has a rich voice that does a great job of carrying you throughout each song.

Their music leads listeners down a path of calmness and serenity.

It's music that could narrate a modernized version of Alice in Wonderland.

Genre:

Dream pop, indie rock

Listen to this:

"Pale Blue Dot"

Find them here:
soundcloud.com/shady-elders

Homebody

Homebody jumps around the emotional spectrum. They represent every color of a mood ring in just one song, and they do it effortlessly. Throughout the entire four minutes of a song, these guys keep you on your toes.

They know they've gotten your attention and they're going to make sure they keep it.

It's exciting music that differs in the fact that it keeps an air of surprise throughout each song.

Genre:

Indie rock

Listen to this:

"Break In"

Find them here:
homebodydenver.bandcamp.com

Lowbody

With this alt-rock band, each song is equivalent to wandering around a thick layer of fog. You're not quite sure what you're going to find, but it'll most likely be something great—like a new-found obsession with this band.

Members consist of Julian Brier on guitar and vocals, Brook Theis on bass and vocals, and Jacob Oldest on drums. Each one works to create the best music listening experience for their fans.

Genre:

Alternative rock

Listen to this:

"Hazy Head"

Find them here:
lowbody.bandcamp.com

American Culture

"Music for Introverts," or so these guys call their sound. The angst levels are high for this one, but in the best way possible.

American Culture puts a tamed twist on the typical punk music we know and (may or may not) love.

Their unique approach revives this genre and eases the enthused punk down a path of rich music.

Punk surely isn't dead.

Genre:

Punk, pop punk

Listen to this:

"Actual Alien"

Find them here:
american-culture.tumblr.com

Kissing Party

Kissing Party is reminiscent of a feel-good indie film that you'd stumble during your nightly perusal of Netflix. Their music is charming, upbeat and leaves you satisfied, but not-so-secretly wanting more.

It's music you'd listen to on a bad day to cheer up, or maybe on a good day too, because why not?

Genre:

Pop punk

Listen to this:

"My Only One"

Find them here:
thekissingparty.com

CASHING IN: GROW YOUR WEATLTH IN COLLEGE

*by Brooke Fox,
Syllabus Contributor*

In a recent survey by U.S. Bank, only 35 percent of college students gave themselves an A or B when it comes to money management. The survey also points out that students rely heavily on their parents for advice, and that college students had severe misunderstandings of how credit, retirement and financial investments work.

The survey also found that male students were more likely than female students to be taught by their parents how to specifically manage their money. Also, while most students do not feel very prepared to meet their financial goals, female students feel less prepared, with only 8 percent responding that they feel extremely prepared to meet their financial goals, according to the study.

Leeds Council, the student government at the Leeds School of Business, joined the mission to equip CU students with better financial knowledge by hosting a personal finance workshop in November. Finance professor Bruce Kline led the workshop; here are some of the highlights:

BUDGETING: “It doesn’t matter how, as long as you do it.”

According to Professor Kline, it is important to find a budget that fits your lifestyle. The majority of your funds, he says, go to housing and transportation, so it is important to think about ways to save in those two areas. Perhaps living further from a prime location or taking the bus is something that you are willing to do. Or, if being close enough to walk is a priority, than you may want to look at other ways to save.

Kline recommends looking back at what you spend your money on, to see if it lines up with the lifestyle you picture for yourself. If you are spending \$130 per month at Starbucks (one \$4 cup every day of the month), then your spending habits could reflect that you prioritize a double shot non-fat soy latte over investing in your future.

Apps and websites such as mint.com are a good way to keep track of what exactly you are spending your money on.



**TIME VALUE OF MONEY: Who wants to be a millionaire?**

The aforementioned survey found that 44 percent of college students do not earn their own spending money. It can be tempting to use up the money that you are given each month, especially if you know more is coming next month, whether it be from your parents or your fairy god-mother. However, the magic force of compound interest may make you change your mind.

Say you put \$100 in an account earning 6 percent interest annually. At the end of the first year, you will have \$106 in the account. The next year, you will earn interest on that \$6 you made in interest, making the balance in your account \$112.36, and you did not have to add a dime to the account to earn that money.

So let's say you cut out the Starbucks and contribute your saved \$130 per month into an account that earns 6 percent annually. Well, \$130 per month adds up to \$1,560 per year, which if invested at an annual rate of 6 percent, means that after 30 years you will have a balance of \$130,730.62, versus \$46,800 if you had not invested.

There are plenty of options available as far as accounts that will earn you interest, but the most recommended for college students is a ROTH IRA, which is an un-taxed retirement account. If you start saving now and contribute more than just your saved Starbucks money each month, think of the yacht you will be able to buy by the time you retire.

DEVELOPING CREDIT: You need this to be good

According to the survey, 61 percent of college students believe that a late payment, whether it be a credit card payment or loan, once paid off is removed from the person's credit history when in reality, it can remain on a credit profile for up to seven years.

Your credit score will be used by future employers, landlords, lenders, medical providers, etc. to determine if you are fiscally responsible, making it important to have a good score. The most important way to maintain a good score is to never be late for a payment.

Money management can be a powerful tool in helping you achieve financial success, and the earlier you start, the more successful you will be.

by *Graham Crawford,*
News Staff

As a student, I identify as someone who is looking to better themselves. One way to do that is by growing my capacity of knowledge. That's the reason why I chose the University of Colorado-Boulder.

Yes, this school is often uniquely judged for its hippie culture, yet past the haze lies an

Krohn said that he has already found employment through the site — it made the process of job searching easy.

unbelievable education that this school has to offer. My hope, along with many of my peers, is that with this education we can develop opportunities to make careers for ourselves and find success in the real world.

Jobs, internships, the real world, oh my!

Finding your way through the job search

Yet, the game has changed, and the accolades of a degree and high GPA no longer guarantee a solid chance to enter into the workforce. Sure, those attributes are important, but the weight of their merit has significantly decreased in contrast to another element of the application process: internships. They've become the most significant part of getting your foot in the door with an employer.

The process of getting accepted for an internship isn't an easy task. That's why CU-Boulder has initiated programs and advising opportunities for its students, concentrated at the Career Services office in the Center for Community. This office is not restricted to any one major and aims to help the overall student body.

Among the opportunities provided to students are career fairs and mixers. A majority of career fairs are held at the University Memorial Center (UMC), and offer an array of

companies that have both booths and representatives to interact with students.

The difficulty of navigating a career fair is the sheer number of students in attendance. This makes it hard to form a personal connection with a representative. To counteract that problem, Career Services has set up what they call "mixers", which provide a more intimate setting. This medium gives students an opportunity to make that personal connection and to truly stand out from the crowd.

For students who are still trying to find their way, Career Services has set up an advising option to help. This type of advising meeting is called Career Development.

Interim Director of Career Services Ann Herman said that it's meant to "[help] students find out who they are". An opportunity like this provides students a forum to acknowledge their options and interests and set them on the right path to complete their goals.

Much like employers, CU views internships as a crucial achievement on an individual's resume. The lessons learned in an internship translate directly in an employment situation. Hence the reason that CU recommends students complete at least have one, if not two or three. Although it's still possible to be hired in the professional world without an internship, it's more challenging without one.

"Most employers value the internship across the board," Herman said. "It's a great opportunity for students to get experience in their field of interest."

Mike Krohn, a junior advertising major, works as a marketing intern for Buffalo Wild Wings in the Chicago area. During his internship, Krohn attended GM marketing



A student teaches another student about opportunities with Teach For America at a career fair at the UMC in 2010. (Amy Moore-Shipley/CU Independent File)

meetings, co-op meetings with Budweiser, designed print ads and helped manage other Chicago Buffalo Wild Wings locations.

"It was sports marketing in a whole different lens" Krohn said. "It makes me look like a viable candidate for future jobs."

Upon returning to Boulder, Krohn has strived to further improve his resume, looking for employment and possible future summer internships. At a career fair earlier in the fall, he felt that it was a good way to get his name out there.

"The CMCI [College of Media, Communication and Information] program did a good job of organizing all the tables, there were a lot of opportunities for people," Krohn said.

In attendance were employers like Sterling-Rice Group, Victor and Spoils, SKI Magazine and Crispin Porter + Bogusky. Krohn also sought out advising from Internship and Career Coordinator Christine Mahoney, who is based out of the CMCI building.

Through her advising, he was able to rework his resume and set up with an online job search called "Career Buffs". This online job billboard takes into account an individual's interests, emailing them a new list of jobs and internships everyday. Krohn said that he has already found employment through the site — it made the process of job searching easy.

Although students face many adversities, they can overcome them with opportunities like those CU's advising services provide. In the academic world, the process of evolving an education into a career is quite difficult.

The key piece to that growth is the experience of an internship. The value it carries into the workforce is necessary for modern-day students. For those here at CU-Boulder, there is an array of tools to help make that advancement. Institutions like Career Services open the door to employment and internship opportunities. In turn, the experience gained legitimizes one's claim to a position in the realm of employment.

Boulder coffee shop superlatives

by Lorelle Lynch,
News Staff

students for being the go-to for a coffee run. Now a household name, nobody can resist Starbucks' seasonal staples. Pumpkin Spice Latte, anyone? The best thing about Starbucks

Finding your own designated college coffee shop here in Boulder isn't hard at all. Every college student has a go-to, from Starbucks to Pekoe Sip House. However, picking the right shop based on your needs can be tough. Here are a few options that you can reference when looking for that next cup of caffeine.



Bri Halterman, a Laughing Goat employee, makes a drink for a customer on Sept. 30, 2014. (Sarah Meisell/ CU Independent)

Best coffee shop for intellectual conversation: Trident Booksellers and Café on Pearl

This coffee shop is attached to the cutest bookstore, but that's just a plus. Trident offers not only great espresso, but also a great selection of loose-leaf teas as well. The low-key, hipster vibe is great for when you want to try something different, and the old time feel is perfect on rainy days when you're ready to talk about philosophy.

Thing to try: Their tea. Pair it with a novel from their bookstore and make a day of it.

Best place to grab coffee before a long lecture: Laughing Goat Coffeehouse at Norlin Library

This is a no-brainer. There is a reason why the lines are always long for this on-campus coffee shop; it's just so darn delicious every time. It's worth a stop before your bio-chem lecture or before a big Norlin study session. The baristas are friendly and try to get you on your way as soon as possible.

Thing to try: Iced Chai Latte, or any of their iced coffees. Can't lose.

Most reliable: Starbucks

With three locations surrounding campus, Starbucks definitely has a reputation among

is that you know you will get a quality product every time.

Thing to try: Chestnut Praline Latte, a holiday staple.

Most underrated coffee shop: Innisfree Poetry Bookstore & Cafe on the Hill

If you're looking for the sweetest little coffee shop on the Hill, this is the spot for you. Innisfree is what a real, down-to-earth cafe should feel like. The staff is friendly and you can't help but pick up their warm, feel-good vibes. They even hold poetry readings for those looking for alternate entertainment.

Thing to try: Matcha Green Tea Latte, and check out their poetry readings!

Best coffee shop to knockout that essay: Flatiron Coffee

With a calm atmosphere, great coffee combos, and plenty of space, Flatiron Coffee is a great place to sit down and write a paper. It also helps that there is a huge selection of coffee. Less packed than some of the other alternatives, the staff and food make Flatiron a great place to get work done. Not to mention the free Wi-Fi.

Thing to try: A Crackti, a Chai Bhakti mixed with Cholaca (liquid cocoa...yum!)

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Pre-Leasing Your Temporary Home

By Ryan Ellis, News Writer

Spring semester at CU Boulder means that for many, the hunt for housing is well underway. For some, the hunt is filled with excitement about the prospects of a new home and new neighborhood. For others, though, the process is an uncomfortable one, making it difficult for them to feel at home in their apartments.

Given that many students find their houses and apartments only weeks before the start of the semester, using sites like Zillow and Craigslist, is pre-leasing even worth the hassle?

I've never pre-leased an apartment, and I've never had any trouble living wherever I wanted. With that in mind, pre-leasing has its benefits and its drawbacks. Let's look at whether it's right for you.

Pros

You get your foot in the door earlier. Many of the nicest apartments in Boulder, especially those close to campus, are pre-leased and therefore off the market up to nine months before the start of each year's lease. If you want to live on the Hill, and be able to walk to campus each morning, the chances are that you'll have to pre-lease.

Reduced risk is another big reason to get in early. Craigslist and Zillow may be great ways to find a home, but there's no guarantee that you'll be successful. By signing a pre-lease agreement, you save yourself from the stress of not having anywhere to live the week before classes start.

"The rule is that the landlord can come to the apartment without warning, as long as it's at a 'reasonable hour,'" -Jess Bobeck, grad student

One of the many signs in town for "Fall Preleasing" for the upcoming school year. (James Bradbury/CU Independent)

Cons

If your landlord pre-leased your apartment to you, **chances are that they will pre-lease it to the next tenant as well.** This means that at some point, long before your lease is up, you'll be put under pressure to sign the next year's lease. This leads to two major inconveniences:

You'll be forced to make a big decision early. Some Boulder realtors, like Housing Helpers, start pre-leasing their apartments as early as October of the year before the next lease starts. If your lease started in August, as many do, you'll only get two months in your house before you have to decide whether you'd like to spend a second year in it.

If you decide not to renew your lease, you'll have prospective renters touring your home early, and on short notice.

It's for reasons like these that CU Student Government has taken a stand against the current state of the pre-leasing process. CUSG is pursuing a city bill that would "make it illegal to re-lease apartments earlier than 120 days before the lease is up." This would allow students to live in their houses for at least one semester before being forced to make decisions about the following year.

CHECKING IN

19

Under the current city code, no more than

THREE

unrelated people may live in one home.

Enforcement of that rule is based solely on complaints.

Police officers won't open their own cases based on the suspicion that more than three unrelated people live in one house, but if they receive any complaints about the house, they may be forced to enforce the limits.



Fossil Fuel Divestment:

WE CAN TALK THE TALK,
BUT CAN WE WALK THE WALK?

*by Isaac Siegel,
News Staff and Opinion*

When people recommend the University of Colorado Boulder to prospective students, the idea of sustainability is often mentioned. There is no denying the fact that CU prides itself on its reputation as a progressively sustainable institution of higher education. And rightly so, the public recognizes that reputation; the Princeton Review recently named CU as the 27th “greenest” university in the nation.

In many ways, we are leading the country in turning environmental concern into action. Home to the nation’s first collegiate recycling program, first zero waste athletics program, first student-led environmental center, and first STARS gold-rated campus, we have much to celebrate. Despite this progress, we are trailing behind a myriad of other institutions, municipalities and nations in an integral area of environmental concern: fossil fuel divestment. About \$30 million of CU’s monstrous endowment fund is comprised of donations stemming from major players in the oil industry.

What does this mean for students? This means that an environmental studies major who is taking ENV5 3520: Energy and Climate Change, learning about the increasingly undeniable and detrimental effects of fossil fuels on our atmosphere, may be afforded such an education on the dollar of a donor within the oil industry. Perhaps I should suggest this scenario to the Program for Writing and Rhetoric at CU to be used as an example of what a paradox is. How can a school that professes to be a leader in sustainability be so reactionary toward a subject that defines the state of our climate and the health of our planet?

The fossil fuel pro-divestment movement is hardly unique to CU; there are a multitude of multi-national organizations that concurrently work to promote fossil fuel divestment. The most notable of these entities is Fossil Free. This international network of campaigns operates under the assertion that “educational and religious institutions, governments and other organizations that serve the public good should divest from fossil fuels.” After all, “if it’s wrong to wreck the climate, then it’s wrong to profit from that wreckage.”

Together, this network has been successful in convincing over 460 institutions around the world to divest. Some of the more notable establishments who have taken the leap include the University of California school system, Syracuse University, the Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund and the British Medical Association. Recently, California became the first state in the U.S. to pass a state-level divestment bill, a monumental step for government-implemented environmental stewardship.

As Anna Leidreiter of the World Future Council states, “the question is no longer if the world will transition to sustainable energy, but how long it will take.” If numerous other institutions can support divestment, many of which have similar educational and financial standards as us, what is holding CU back from transforming its assets toward sustainability? The answer is... (drum roll please) The Board of Regents!

This group of executives is in exclusive control and direction of all funds and appropriations to the university. They are the ones that determine whether or not to accept funding from fossil fuel companies. In short, they determine the sustainability and environmental impact of our community.

Our current position in the divestment fight is similar to a child trying to convince a parent that smoking is harmful. The parent has been smoking their entire life. They are not willing to change their ways and, because of the way they’ve been socialized, do not feel that they are doing anything wrong. On the other hand, the child has an untainted perspective toward the issue and can understand the detrimental effects





Alex Duryea, sophomore environmental studies major, plays with a giant globe during Global Jam on Farrand Field August 2014. (Kai Casey/CU Independent)

of inhaling tar, especially since the child grew up in an environment with a much different attitude toward tobacco than the parent. Our board of regents is akin to the smoking parent in denial. They have not been socialized to hold environmental health as a priority and do not understand the cascading effect of their actions, namely, how fossil fuel divestment would reflect the attitudes of our university and thereby affect the attitudes of our affiliates.

Sue Sharkey, a member of the board since 2010, recently expressed her ignorance toward fossil fuels' interconnected implications in environmental degradation when she stated, "it is a ridiculous case, I think, to make that this university divesting from fossil fuels is going to make a difference toward climate change or global warming or whatever the term is — I can't keep up." Translated, Sharkey is exposing that she has no substantial knowledge about climate science. To her comfort, she is not alone in her perspective; many business-minded individuals, as Sharkey and the entirety of the board of regents constitutes, consider economic issues a more pertinent concern than their environmental counterpart. Can we blame them for their lack of knowledge-based decisions? Personally, I sympathize with the non-scientific critic of environmental activists. They are making decisions and voicing opinions based on what they know. The difference between the opinion of the climate scientist and the economic analyst when it comes to "global warming" is that the former is based off of researched knowledge while the latter is based off of idiocy.

While economic growth is paramount to the success and advancement of CU, and the idea of divesting from fossil fuels is often seen as

a potential economic injury, doing such would expand our funding. Green-driven growth is evident in the transition of major global cities from fossil fuel based communities to ones that rely on sustainable energy. Vancouver, for example, has reaped massive benefits from transitioning to renewables; the city's brand is now valued at \$31 billion as a result of its reputation as a green, sustainable city.

In addition, 3,000 new green jobs have emerged in the past five years. This is just the beginning of the sustainable revolution. As consciousness toward the issue rises, the transition from fossil fuels will only increase. The evolution into sustainable forms of energy is inevitable; will we help spearhead the movement?

Despite the seemingly impermeable institutional barriers that environmentally conscious, fossil free proponents face, there exists a burgeoning hope. In 2016, three seats on the Board of Regents will be up for re-election. As one of the leading research universities in the world, home to one of the most knowledgeable bodies of individuals when it comes to sustainability, we have a responsibility to our planet to act as a microcosm of responsible development. In order to achieve divestment, we must activate the voters of Colorado to consider a candidate's stance on fossil fuels when at the polls. Once we elect a Board of Regents that is representative of the sentiments of its population, not only will we divest from fossil fuels, we will manifest democracy and embody our claim as a "green" university.

Looking back: Was having the GOP debate on campus worth it?



People cheer and shout during the speeches at the immigration rally on Farrand Field before the GOP debate on campus October 2015. (Danny Anderson/CU Independent)

by **Ellis Arnold,**
Editorial Manager

When the announcement came that the University of Colorado would be hosting a Republican presidential debate, the biggest question on students' minds was: Why?

Bringing the GOP to a city cheekily referred to as the "People's Republic of Boulder" seemed like a political calculation that was far from obvious.

Comments by Chancellor Phillip DiStefano framed the debate as an opportunity for student and community engagement, and Regent Sue Sharkey viewed it as an opportunity to bring ideological diversity to a largely one-sided campus.

Now, post-debate, the question is: Were the administration's goals met? And was having the debate on campus a positive move for students — and for the GOP? CU faculty and students weighed in.

"I think it's really hard when you sequester the event from the students and communi-

ty at large to have community engagement," said Michael Kodas, associate director of CU's Center for Environmental Journalism and a journalism instructor here.

Televised debates typically have small audiences, but it is unclear whether the RNC could have issued more tickets or invited more students. The RNC increased the student ticket limit twice before debate day, once in September and once in October.

"I can't see it as being that effective in promoting diversity of opinion when the people whose opinions are the most diverse are saying them to a [television audience]," Kodas said. "I'm less than half a mile away [from the debate], but I was getting my updates from the national media."

"I think it accomplishes goals of ideology as understood by the partisan regents," said Mike McDevitt, professor of journalism and media studies. Five of the nine CU regents are Republicans, as is CU President Bruce Benson.

"In mainstream journalism and politics, there's this idea of fairness as operationalized as balance [between liberal and conservative views], sometimes called 'false balance,'" McDevitt said. "That type of balance is not appropriate in a media studies, political science, or social studies or history course."

McDevitt sees the idea of arbitrarily balancing liberal and conservative ideas as counter-productive to reaching relevant conclusions in politics or journalism. He argues that ideological perspective in higher education is greater than it is in mainstream politics, and that debates could be better at promoting ideological diversity if faculty were involved in selecting questions for the candidates.

Despite criticizing the idea of giving political ideas equal weight based on such balancing, McDevitt saw the event as possibly beneficial for conservative students at CU.

"I would hope that students here who identify as Republicans...feel more comfortable about expressing their views among peers in classroom settings," he said. "Faculty welcome both liberal and conservative discussions."

"I don't know whether having the debate here on campus is gonna translate into [students] having more [comfort] in expressing views," McDevitt said. "We want that."

"The downside is, the way we did this, we're communicating to students that we don't care about their opinions."

— Professor Vanessa Baird

Kodas saw a silver lining in hosting the debate even with the conflict over the amount of student tickets.

"I think that it definitely got students a little more engaged in the election," Kodas said. "It fired up a number of students that I've spoken with to feel they needed to be more assertive

in being part of the political process.”

Students were involved in a pro-immigration rally on Farrand Field, a pre-debate panel led by Student Voices Count and various protest-related activities at the designated free speech area on the Koelbel business field.

“Will [students] do a watch party for future debates? That’ll be the real litmus test here, as for whether they’ll have a lasting interest in the process,” Kodas said, referring to the CU Student Government-hosted watch party that saw around 1,000 attendees.

University administration also expressed the goal of garnering publicity for CU, a goal that has received criticism and scrutiny from students and faculty.

“I think there are some good benefits, it’ll raise awareness for the nation of our university,” said Vanessa Baird, associate professor of political science. “The downside is, the way we did this, we’re communicating to students that we don’t care about their opinions.”

“I can imagine on a national scale among conservative voters that...it might change the image of CU,” Kodas said. “As to whether that will outweigh the [coverage of student dissatisfaction]...that could end up being more memorable than having the debate at a liberal campus.”

The Daily Camera reported last week that debates like this can garner millions of dollars in publicity value for universities, but that the concrete benefits are hard to quantify.

“All in all, it will be worth it to the university. It’ll be hard to track what the benefits will be,” McDevitt said. “Common sense would suggest it’s beneficial.”

McDevitt echoed Kodas’ concerns that the media coverage of student discontent could outweigh the positive effects. To better engage students and faculty in these situations, McDevitt suggested that faculty and students should be able to submit, or influence, the questions asked of candidates.

“University administration and faculty should have pushed for more input on the types of questions put to candidates,” McDevitt said.

A different question is whether the GOP made a good move in bringing the debate to CU. Despite the liberal majority in Boulder, Colorado’s status as a swing state or “purple” state due to its near-equal percentage of registered Democrats and Republicans makes it a critical target for both parties.

“I think having the debate here in a swing state makes sense as a strategy for the GOP,” McDevitt said. Kodas agreed, saying it shows the party is “not afraid to go to a very liber-

al university where they’d disagree with the ideas of the population on campus.”

With the heavy focus in the media of the

Elizabeth Skewes, associate professor of journalism and media studies, said, “I think it serves as a distraction — the [back and forth]



The debate stage at Coors Events Center. (Photo courtesy of Glenn Asakawa)

moderator-candidate conflict in the debate, it is more unclear whether the debate will benefit the party.

“I don’t know if it’s good for the GOP; I think it’s good for the individual candidates,” Kodas said of the conflict. “Pushing back against the ‘liberal media,’ these guys get some

moments were more heated so it’s easier to remember them. I mean, sadly, it makes it hard to remember the substantive part of [the debate].”

“I went in expecting to see a lot of theatrics, and I think that’s what we ended up seeing,” said Joseph Soto, president of external affairs for CU Student Government.

“I think substantive policy discussions are an important thing for debates, and I think we saw an inkling of that, but not as much as students deserved, especially with it being held on our campus.”

“I think the biggest tie-in to the goals the administration had was in the watch party and students expressing their opinions on social media,” said Boneth Ahaneku, president of internal affairs for CUSG and a debate attendee.

“Out of all the goals the chancellor expressed, this is the one that showed to be true — it got the students talking.

“The most important thing was free speech was still able to happen,” Ahaneku said. “And students were able to express their opinions in some fashion.”



Protesters brought attention to various issues out on the free speech zone on CU’s Koelbel business field Oct. 28, 2015. (Will McKay/CU Independent)

points.

“On one hand, I can see that [candidate Ted Cruz] is correct in saying [the moderators’ tone] shows media bias, but not the kind of bias he thinks it is. It’s not a liberal bias, it’s a media bias toward getting dramatic reactions or angry answers,” Kodas said.

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Spring 2016: Academic Calendar

Monday, Jan. 11: First Day of Classes

Monday, Jan. 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Wednesday, Jan. 20: Last day to add a class in MyCUInfo

Friday, Jan. 22: Last day to waive health insurance/submit immunization forms

Wednesday, Jan. 27: Last day to drop a class without fees or a 'W'

Friday, Feb. 5: Tuition Due

Wednesday, March 2: Fall 2016 schedule of classes available in MyCUInfo

Thursday, March 17: St. Patty's Day

Friday, March 18: Last day to drop a class in MyCUInfo

March 21-25: SPRING BREAK

March 28-April 24: Fall 2016 Registration

Saturday, April 30: Reading Day

May 1-5, 2015: Finals Week

Saturday, May 7: Commencement

Where are we headed, Title IX?

by Jordyn Siemens,
Syllabus Content Editor

For massive bureaucracies like the University of Colorado, causes like that of the Title IX amendment are sometimes swallowed up by the alphabet soup of campus offices and departments. Nourishing the needs of students, adjuncts and employees, these offices attempt to represent each protected class to some degree, to avoid discrimination and promote a positive environment for all students.

The OIEC and Title IX

In June 2014, CU gave sexual discrimination extra attention, hiring former civil rights attorney Valerie Simons as the university's new Title IX Coordinator. In her position, Simons represents the relatively new Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance, and by extension, is a champion of preventing and handling sexual misconduct on and off campus.

The OIEC, an inevitable piece of infrastructure to the university's credibility, was created out of necessity and growing public alarm over cases of rape, sexual harassment and other sex-based discrimination in student and employee settings.

But what took the CU system 42 years to create an office representing Title IX, a federal law passed in 1972, when women have attended the University of Colorado since its establishment in 1876? The answer is clear: CU needed a more efficient way to handle and prevent situations like the recent John Doe and Sarah Gilchrese cases.

Previously, CU Boulder had the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, which handled student-side complaints, and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement, which dealt with cases involving campus employees. These cases could involve any measure of harassment or discrimination.

September 2013 marked a change in this investigative system when representatives from the Pepper Hamilton law firm ran an external review of CU's campus. Chancellor Philip DiStefano hired the firm on the same day he announced that the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights was investigating the university's handling of a particular sexual assault case.

Pepper Hamilton concluded that the university was compliant to legal requirements, and had an "effective investigative model designed to achieve adequate and reliable investigations." According to Simons, the firm did recommend that the current dual-office could be streamlined for investigative efficiency, although it was not a popular model at the time.

"Title IX definitely goes into the student and the employee side, as do a lot of the protected classes," Simons said. After she was hired, it made sense to her to combine the mission of both offices.

So although the alphabet soup got thicker, cases of sexual discrimination seem to travel through less red tape than they used to.

"We respond to any complaints that we get," Simons said. "And how that works structurally is I have the director of investigations, the associate director and six full time investigators. They look at all the complaints including but not limited to sexual misconduct."

Gauging Campus

With the OIEC in place, the Office of Student Conduct now exists to deal with disciplinary cases that do not involve sexual misconduct. The Office of Discrimination and Harassment ceased to exist due to the change, and Title VII-based complaints were directed elsewhere.

Enter the Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement. With more than 30,000 students enrolled at the Boulder campus, the university's best tool to understand student attitudes is the survey. Every four years, a standardized set of questions developed by the OIEC about campus experiences, diversity and inclusion is sent to each affiliated student email account. These campus climate surveys are a part of the university's diversity plan.

But the campus climate survey will no longer seek responses about sexual harassment or assault on the basis of sex. As of fall 2015, that issue has a survey of its own. Released for the very first time on Oct. 19, 2015, students and faculty members received a link in their inboxes to take the OIEC's Sexual

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Misconduct Survey. The survey is specific to the University of Colorado's policies, asking students questions in a tree-like 'yes or no' structure, with affirmative responses warranting more in-depth descriptions such as where certain behavior took place and which law enforcement agency was involved.

According to Simons, the survey is "structured so that you are learning about our policies as you go" due to the detailed multiple-choice format and specific attention paid to Boulder's neighborhoods, offices, institutions and history. Building the survey took one year, an advisory board, and multiple student focus groups that took versions of the survey to provide feedback about its syntax, simplicity and educational value. When asked why CU elected not to use a standard test like the American Association of Universities' campus survey on sexual assault and sexual misconduct, Simons cited its over-generalized nature.

"The problem with the AAU is that I wouldn't know what to do with it," she said. "If someone suffers sexual misconduct and doesn't report, we want to know why."

And those inconsistencies may stem from different seeds in Boulder, versus the rest of the United States. One misconception to avoid is that the survey is a reporting vehicle. Although the link is sent to student email accounts, their names are not connected to survey responses after submission. Data is meant to show where certain behavior and incidents are happening on CU Boulder's campus.

"We need to know what our 1-in-5 is, and lower it. That's our goal." The survey ended on Nov. 16, with a 41 percent response rate.



Title IX Coordinator Valerie Simons gives a training to CU Boulder faculty and staff Oct. 7, 2017. (Lars Gesing/CU Independent)

The last dash of efficiency in CU's survey plan focuses on target markets. An initial version of this year's survey was released to the graduate student population last year, and its success prompted the final draft's fall release.

Breaking Tradition: Prevention

Until this year, students asked "What the Help?" at freshman orientation sessions. That program was the first version of bystander education offered at CU Boulder. Other sessions offered compliance training, where student leaders would talk about campus policies, consequences of violating those policies and available resources.

In 2015, orientation changed, and so did bystander training.

The New Student Welcome Program's online experience includes a module titled "Community Equity" that covers policy, including sexual misconduct, discrimination and harassment. The module ends with a required quiz that students must take to continue the registration process. Once they get to Boulder, freshmen are required to follow-up with a new-and-improved bystander intervention session.

Training freshmen is well-intentioned, but the reality is that a one-hour session and online quiz may not necessarily dictate a student's behavior for their 4-6 years on campus. Student employees complete diversity training each year, ongoing Community Health programs like "With Pleasure" and "I Wish I'd Known" exist for all students, and promotional material for campus resource offices such as Counseling and Psychological Services are distributed across campus each semester.

But is it enough?

It may be on campus, but 71 percent of CU students live in unaffiliated off-campus housing. This does not include off-campus dorms, family housing or sorority houses, who already participate in mandatory bystander trainings. So how does an office like the OIEC educate upperclassmen living in areas like East Campus, Goss Grove, houses on the Hill or in fraternities? The answer used to manifest Party Registration, "party smart" card decks, and promoting national awareness campaigns like "It's On Us."

But Simons would elect group-specific bystander trainings as a directly effective measure, above the rest. To her, student communities are "natural places to train people, because they self-identify with each other," and these niche groups inherently deal with different and more personalized problems that standardized training sessions may not address.

"For example, we created a bystander education program specifically with the fraternities [last spring]," she said. "This was a partnership, and it was voluntary, and we did trainings for all 16 fraternities affiliated with the intrafraternity council. Each house is different, so we asked questions about what a party scene looks like to them, and how to be safe in their own environments."



Secy. of Education Arne Duncan tweeted about CU's policies recently. (Jordyn Siemens/Screenshot)

Over 80 percent of brothers in each fraternity house, despite disaffiliation with the university, participated in these sessions in 2015. The training did not take place in the fall, but Simons hopes that an enduring agreement can exist between the OIEC and houses on the Hill. Of course, if houses were re-affiliated with the University of Colorado, these trainings would become automatically required, but for now, voluntary participation is necessary for continued success.

Basketball's Thomas Akyazili enjoying the American life

By Alissa Noe



Akyazili in his jersey, warming up at the CEC. Courtesy Matt Sisneros, CU Independent

After digging around Europe last season for recruits, the Buffaloes basketball team added freshman guard Thomas Akyazili to its roster this season. The 6'2" guard hails from Antwerp, Belgium, where he shined in their Under-16 and Under-18 European Championships prior to transitioning to America.

Akyazili's assimilation into American life started before Head Coach Tad Boyle and his staff recruited him, back when he was 17. After his performance in the U-16 Euro Championships, Akyazili caught the attention of the Italians and Golden State Warriors star Stephen Curry.

You read that right.

"After (the championship), I was contacted by a person from Italy. He had to choose someone from Europe to participate in the Steph Curry camp, and when I heard it was Stephen Curry—it was in the Bay Area, so it was pretty far for me," Akyazili said. "He was my favorite player so I just accepted it and I was there. My first time in the U.S." But it wasn't just your average coach-player relationship that you see in most camps like that.

"(Curry) just participated in drills," Akyazili said. "That was the coolest thing about it; like he was not just standing on the side, he was like really participating."

That's also when Akyazili got his first taste of American ball.

"That was the first time I really saw how [basketball] was in the U.S.," Akyazili said. "It's way bigger than in Belgium, so that was one of the

choices I made. That was when I realized that I could play in the U.S."

When he went back to Europe after his time with the Baby Faced Assassin, Akyazili played for Europe's U-18 team and averaged 15.6 points per game, 4.6 assists and 4.1 rebounds. That's when his skills grabbed the interest of the Colorado basketball program. According to Akyazili, that particular guard camp in California made his decision to play college ball in America a little easier.

Going in, though, he didn't think much of how similar or different his new life in the United States might be. When he arrived in Boulder over the summer, he got right to work.

"I didn't really have any expectations," he said. "Like, in the beginning, I was here on my own with Kenan (Guzonjic) and a few other players. I just tried to work out every day and get used to this rhythm, because the thing I like most about college basketball right here, this game, like in the morning we practice, have school, classes and in the evening I'm free to do whatever I want."

Despite differences that arose in balancing his class schedule and practice schedule, Akyazili had already grown accustomed to dorm life.

"I used to go to boarding school one year in Belgium, so I was a little bit used to the dorms," he said. "Of course I prefer having my own room and being at home, but it's okay. I have my roommate, Kenan, my suitemate is Mitch Lombard, the other freshman, and a good friend of him, a great guy."

As far as basketball goes, Akyazili says the pace of the game is something he's had to adjust to.

"It's more athletic," he said. "Like here, sometimes at practice, I feel like you can't make easy layups. There's always someone there trying to block your shot. In Europe, it's like when you beat someone, it's like help side, there's help side. But I feel like it's easier to score because it's less athletic than here."

But he didn't expect to become so close to his teammates and coaches once he arrived in Colorado. In Belgium, Akyazili said he and his teammates and coaches operated under a more business-like model.

"Say it's like you really know each other, like here, next to the court you're friends. And in Belgium, it's more like business side. You don't really know the coaches outside of coaches, and here you do, so it's a little bit different. It's a little bit adapting for me, too," Akyazili said. "I don't know, it's weird."

For now, Akyazili is an open option major at the university, but after testing the waters of different departments during his first semester of classes, he believes communications will be the major for him.

And because his English is always getting better, there's nothing stopping him.

"In the beginning I made in-my-head translations all the time, so I translate from Dutch to English, and now I do it automatically, so I start to think in English and I think that's a good thing," he said.



Making your grade

As academia is exploring more and more alternatives to GPAs and traditional grading systems, one CU professor has an answer — his students choose their grade at the beginning of the class.

Y our professors probably don't trust you as much as Chris Carruth trusts his students. Trust is everything in Carruth's Meaning of Information Technology class — it's the basis of his teaching style, his solution to the problems of modern academia and the foundation upon which the class rests.

He teaches MIT in Atlas 100, a lecture hall so spacious that it's sometimes hard to hear him, even when he wears a microphone. Carruth speaks softly and calmly as he walks students through concepts as concrete as the construction of a computer's motherboard or as esoteric as an artificial intelligence's ability to love. Each class is more like a TED talk than a lecture.

Carruth approaches education democratically; in his classroom, students and teachers are equals, and they treat each other like adults. That manifests in the most concrete way that Carruth demonstrates his trust in students — grading contracts.

There's no rubric that the teacher assesses students' work against. At the beginning of the semester, students sign up for the grade they want to earn, and they're told how much work they have to do to get it. Do the work, get the grade. It's a more subjective, process-over-results approach.

"It's getting away from this sort of structure that seems to pit students, in some ways, against the instructor," Carruth said. "They're holding a grade above you, and you've got to work toward this, all these obstacles that seem arbitrary. The grading contract is one way to combat that. You want an A? You get an A, but this is what you have to do."

In Carruth's MIT class, it looks like this: if you sign up for a C, you need only submit five assignments and demonstrate a "basic understanding of course material." You can have five unexcused absences and don't need to participate much. Students who sign up for a B must participate regularly, submit six assignments, miss no more than four classes and write a personal essay about the confluence of technology and their field of study.

To earn an A, a student has to complete every B requirement, can't miss any assignments, must demonstrate an "advanced understanding, analysis and critique of course material," and has to participate in a challenge in which they give up social media for two weeks.

"You still have to do the requirements, you still have to attend, you still have to contribute," Carruth said. "So it's subjective, but if you don't do those base things, then the grade goes down, and the fallback is, 'Well, you signed up for this. It's in the contract.'"

Carruth has been teaching off and on since 2004, when he was a teaching assistant at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. He taught English in Korea in 2006, and was working in IT in 2009 when he survived a rollover car crash on Interstate 25 by Eden, Colo. The accident could easily have killed him, but he walked away wanting to pursue something more meaningful.

“Life is short and everything rests on a foundation of sand, even if we tell ourselves otherwise,” Carruth said. “This is my lyrical way of saying, yes, it caused an existential crisis that set me upon my current path.”

He came to CU-Boulder to pursue graduate studies with a focus on technology for humanitarian purposes. He taught digital literacy to at-risk youth and to soon-to-be-released inmates at the Boulder County Jail, then he got offered a professorship teaching one section of Meaning of Information Technology.

Carruth heard about grading contracts two years ago at a seminar for CU’s Faculty Teaching and Excellence Program. He’d taught MIT for a semester at that point, using a traditional grading rubric, and he didn’t like assigning grades based on subjective material — how the hell could you objectively evaluate how a student relates Baudrillard and Plato to modern technology?

Then, at the FTEP seminar, Carruth heard a professor rail against established academia and bring up grading contracts as a counter to tradition. He doesn’t remember her name — only that she was fiery — but she changed the way he taught.

Grading contracts differentiate themselves from traditional systems in that students have complete ownership over their grades. In any other class, a C would be punishment for not studying, for missing assignments or class, or for not grasping the material. In Carruth’s class, the criteria for that grade is the same, but he and the student have agreed upon the grade and the level of work ahead of time — a level playing field.

“Many students have signed up for Cs,” Carruth said. “Students sign up for courses for a variety of reasons and some acknowledge that they don’t have the time or interest to fully commit themselves. I appreciate that, actually.”

“There’s a lot of artificiality.
Let’s create this structure, and
you gotta work within this
little framework. I want to have
a real conversation. I want to
break that down”
— Prof. Chris Carruth

So do his students.

“Professor Carruth tells you exactly what you need to do in order to keep your grade you signed up for and it’s as easy as that,” Amanda Knapp, a junior humanities and technology and digital media double major, said. “The grading contract definitely changed how I would normally approach a class.”

It could also be part of the solution for teaching the so-called ADD generation, another way to engage students directly. Carruth allows computers in his class — how could you not, in a class called

Meaning of Information Technology — and most students use them. He peppers his lecture slides with GIFs and video to draw students back from Facebook, Pinterest and fantasy football.



(LinkedIn)

“It’s meant to parse the lecture, to have points that’ll keep you coming back, coming back, like a cat following a laser beam,” Carruth said.

He prompts discussions throughout class, banters with students and bounces ideas off of them. When no one speaks up, he doesn’t raise his voice, and never seems more than mildly annoyed that people are still waking up at 9:30 a.m. His lectures — or TED talks — are open forums.

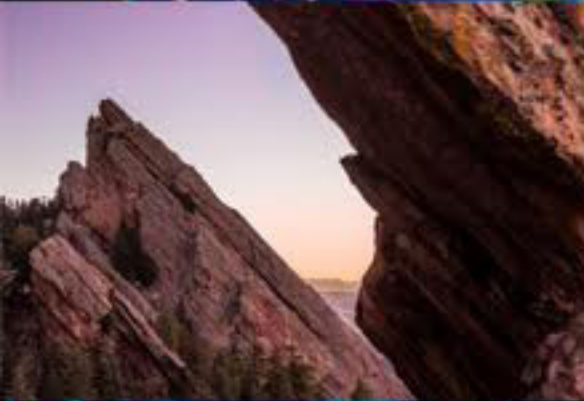
“Going back to academia, there’s a lot of artificiality,” Carruth said. “‘Let’s create this structure, and you gotta work within this little framework.’ I want to have a real conversation, I want to break that all down. It’s just you and me. I’m not above you, I’m in the same position. Let’s have a discussion; let’s talk. Let’s learn together.”

For that, you need trust. And in Carruth’s class, that’s what you sign up for.









Get to know your men's basketball team

by Jake Mauff,
Sports Writer

The air in the room was tense. It was quiet, except for the squeaks of the players' shoes. Suddenly, the coach yells the play dead. A rage-filled rant ensues, filling the empty arena with noise. There's an exceptional amount of stress present at the moment. The season was about to start.

Colorado men's basketball started its season on Nov. 13. Like every other team in the NCAA, they have visions of March dancing in their heads. The team ends in a huddle, united with one goal: to win. That doesn't mean they don't have fun.

The Buffs' locker room is full of different personalities. It's tough to place superlatives on the team's men, but there seems to be some consensus about who is king of what. Senior forward Josh Scott has the worst musical taste. At least, redshirt junior forward Wesley Gordon believes so.

"Taylor Swift," Gordon said, when asked what type of music Scott listens to.

"Everyone probably says it's me, Eli [Stalzer], Mitch [Lombard]," Scott admitted. "We're not opposed to listening to some Taylor Swift, some Miley [Cyrus]."

This isn't the absolute consensus from the team on most annoying music.

"I'd probably have to say Kenan [Guzonjic]'s," redshirt junior guard Josh Fortune said. "He's from Bosnia, so I don't understand the lyrics."

There seem to be a lot of unusual sounds competing in the locker room. From the philosophy of Taylor Swift to the dulcet tones of Bosnia, there's a lot going on. Not the least of which are the players.

The players don't necessarily have a concrete agreement on which of his teammates are the loudest.

"George King," said Gordon. "He's just joking all the time."

Though he doesn't think so, Gordon was accused of being the loudest as well.

"Probably Wes," Scott said. "He's always joking, always messing around, always arguing with someone."

"We're not opposed to listening to some Taylor Swift, some Miley"

—Josh Scott



(Matt Sisneros/CU Independent)

"Probably me," King said. "I like to talk. . . I just talk all the time."

This idea doesn't register immediately with Fortune.

"It really depends, we have a lot of clowns," the guard offered. "Between Wesley and Tory [Miller], everybody, really."

Laugh together, win together. The clowns on the team get around in the locker room.

"Wesley's probably the funniest," opined Fortune. "He's just a clown. He just jokes about everything."

"Yeah, by far the funniest," reiterated Scott. "If you know Wesley you just know he's funny."

The forward didn't think that highly of himself. Gordon offered King's name when asked the question. King also deferred to one of his teammates.

"Tory Miller," King said. "He is the funniest. He's got a lot of old school comedy in him that I understand."

Colorado is a happy team in the locker room. Thankfully, there is some basketball being played.

Fortune says every member of the team stays after to get some shooting in. Some more so than others. One such name kept popping up.

"Thomas Akyazili," Gordon stated. "He's always shooting around when I come in, so probably about an hour, hour and a half extra [after practice]."

King and Scott reiterate this sentiment.

Akyazili is hoping to capitalize on his extra practice time. So will the rest of the team. For now, it's time to get ready for some basketball.

The Godfather of CU skiing

by Cannon Casey,
Copy Editor

When you think CU skiing, you think Richard Rokos. In 2015, the University of Colorado ski team won its 20th national championship, giving Rokos his school-record eighth national title. The Czechoslovakian-born coach is entering his 25th season as the head skiing coach at the University of Colorado.

“Being in one profession for so long it expands the boundaries of my responsibility,” said Rokos. “Year by year I’m picking up more and more assignments and sidetracks, which makes the whole thing very complex.”

Sixty-four-year-old Rokos has always been connected with skiing. He skied internationally for the former Czechoslovakian team for 19 years.

“He’s very involved with the sport,” said alpine assistant coach Fletcher McDonald who previously skied under coach Rokos.

McDonald is in his first year coaching at the University of Colorado, and said not much has changed from when he was an athlete.

Rokos’ methods are “pretty much the same through and through. What he does works and it’s been proven with his success and our success as a team,” said McDonald. “He treats the athletes like family.”

Rokos tries to take a holistic approach to coaching. He rides his bike every day and even takes it on the trips that the ski team goes on. Rokos is also big on injury prevention and living a healthy lifestyle.

“To be the best you have to fight for it on all levels,” said Rokos. “My philosophy is that I have to be a role model in lifestyle and having a passion for the sport.”

His coaching career began with the Czechoslovakian Junior National Team in 1977. In 1980, Rokos left the communist state and headed to Austria.

Rokos and his family spent a year in Austria, where he coached various teams. He defected from Czechoslovakia to the United States, and became a coach at the Grampian Mountain Ski



School in Michigan, where he spent four years working with the U.S. Pro Ski Tour.

Shortly after, the Rokos family moved to Colorado and the rest is history. CU hired him as an assistant in 1987, and he quickly moved up to head coach in 1990.

Rokos might need an extra room in his house for the trophies he’s accumulated. These accolades include eight NCAA Championships, 12 NCAA West Regional Championships with seven runner-up finishes and 182 All-Americans (114 of those are first team) with 34 individual national champions.

“I’m very proud of every opportunity and accomplishment that I have,” said Rokos.

Rokos’ achievements don’t stop at collegiate competition. He was the head alpine coach of the United States team at the World University Games seven times, including 1995 in Spain, 1997 in Korea, 1999 in Poland, 2003 and 2007 in Italy, 2005 in Austria and 2011 in Turkey.

And in the 1997 Korean games, Rokos was the head coach of the entire U.S. Ski Team. His athletes have brought home four gold, four silver and several bronze medals.

“There’s definitely a lot of respect for him,” said McDonald. “For him to coach here and then to go coach in the world university games is huge for the school.”

Under Rokos, Colorado teams have won 61 of 147 meets they have skied in. It comes as no surprise that he is the longest tenured coach in CU skiing history.

Talking about his success, Rokos said humbly, “It’s a natural progression with be-

ing in the job for so long. Eventually you make it to that level.”

He has won the RMISA coach of the year seven times and the United States Collegiate Ski Coaches Association National Coach of the Year four times. He also earned the “Top of the Rocky Award” as our region’s top college coach (selected by writers and critics of the Rocky Mountain News) and was also selected as the Coach of the Year in the state of Colorado by the Sportswomen of Colorado Hall of Fame in 2006.

To top it all off, in 2013, he was selected for induction into the Colorado Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame and has even met former president George Bush.

A secret to all this success?

“Be honest all the time,” Rokos said. “That’s the only way you can be successful for a long time and have credibility.”

Rokos by the Numbers

8

national championships

12

West regional championships

182

All-Americans

34

individual championships

Life in the club

Club sports athletes have the same academic and time commitments as their Division-I counterparts — but they have to pay to play and aren't on scholarship

*by Justin Guerriero,
Assistant Sports Editor*

There's something to be said about the passion and drive of collegiate athletes. In many cases, these athletes have been participating in their respective sports for a good chunk of their lives, and don't want to let go just yet.

Compared to club sports, Division I athletics undoubtedly get the most attention and glory, especially when it comes to fan support, popularity and admiration. But the time commitment that comes with being part of a team, D1 or not, is substantial.

"I understand that there's obviously a big difference in skill [between D1 and club level athletes]," said Nick Lowary, a junior Civil Engineering student and men's lacrosse goalie. "But we put in just as much time as a lot of those guys do. The top level of club sports could easily compete with Division II and Division III teams."

The men's club lacrosse team is affiliated with the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association (MCLA) and the Rocky Mountain Lacrosse Conference (RMLC). The team plays 16 games every spring and routinely participates in out of state tournaments. But the fact of the matter is that Division I athletics generate the kind of attention and profit that club sports simply cannot, regardless of success.

Lowary, who played four years of lacrosse in high school in his native St. Louis, Mo., said that the decision to continue playing in college has helped him off the field, too.

"Our coach is a huge proponent of self-discipline and accountability," Lowary said. "Interpersonal relationships too. It's all on us."

And so are finances. Club athletes, who take the time to play their sport at a level that is not designed to propel them to a professional level, pay for their seasons, equipment and travel out of pocket. Lowary and his teammates pay close to \$3,000 a season to play lacrosse, for the love of the game.

Jess Rubino, a junior and member of CU's

club freeskiing team, paid \$750 for her first season at Colorado. Dues for that team decrease by \$100 for each additional year a skier stays on the team.

"There's a ton of passion on the team. We have a saying that goes 'No fun in D1,'" Lowary said. "It just sucks the fun out of things, it turns it into a job."

That's not to say things are all fun and games. The lacrosse team in particular runs organized workouts and practices for most of the year. In the offseason, the time commitment can easily reach 20 hours a week, while the regular-season number can climb to over 30. Freeskiing team members practice four days a week, working on conditioning, weight training, and their tricks using trampolines and the high diving boards at the rec center.

"It's more or less optional," Rubino said. "You get what you put in. We are actually one of the few teams on campus that are allowed to use the high dive, and we go twice a week to practice tricks."

Actual skiing takes place at the Arapahoe Basin, Breckenridge, and Keystone ski areas, with some days at Vail and Beaver Creek.

Rubino added that the community in itself, just and campus groups. The up of CU graduates, and improve.

70-member team is quite the like other Division I organizations coaching staff, which is entirely made makes it even easier to join the team

"It's like a family, maybe similar to how one might feel about being in a fraternity or sorority," she said.

"Those people will be my best friends for life. There's a big Facebook group for team members and whoever has a car will post where and when they're going to ski, so people you don't even know could ask to be picked up. That's how I made a lot of my friends on the team."

In an environment with limited fan support and overall recognition, athletes like Nick and Jess are examples of the intrinsically motivated athlete. Their passion is easily seen at the club sport level, despite the fact that their games and events are generally not covered by the media or televised. But who needs attention when you've got love for the game?



Report Card: Grading the 2015 Buffaloes

Reviewing CU's football season

*by Jake Mauff and
Justin Guerriero,
Sports Writers*

Football season came and went once again. The University of Colorado Buffaloes finished 4-9. Football writers Justin Guerriero and Jake Mauff assign offensive and defensive final grades in this edition of "Report Card."

Jake Mauff:

Offense:

The offense had its struggles throughout the season. None is more obvious than red zone scoring.

Out of all the Division I College Football programs in the nation, Colorado finished 120 out of 127, scoring on only 70.4 percent of all drives that reached the end zone. A field goal shouldn't be out of the question when the team reaches this end of the field. The only thing that matters in football games are points and the Buffs were giving away easy points this season. This is especially damning considering how close some of CU's games were.

Overall, Colorado's offense seemed to click against the easier opponents on its schedule. They employed a run-first attack against UMass and Nicholls in September, each working to great success. Against tougher opponents, CU couldn't generate as much of a rushing game and the offense suffered.

The offense began to click when runs by junior quarterback Sefo Liufau were added. It gave the offense longer drives and confused opposing defenses. When Liufau went down, the offense seemed to go down with him.

There were moments against USC, the game that caused Liufau to be lost for the season with a broken foot, that saw the offense do good things. Against Washington State, those flashes of potential were nonexistent. Senior wide receiver Nelson Spruce's best stretch of the season came in these three games. The back-up quarterbacks knew he was a go-to guy and he continued to make plays. It'll be tough to replace him next season.

Overall grade: C

Justin Guerriero:

Offense:

It was a strange year offensively for this Buffs team. Quite a bit of talent, that's for sure, yet lacking in execution. And what is talent without proper execution?

I think the Buffs are among the leaders of the Pac-12 in terms of talent. Yet, here the

about the end result of it.

If there's one primary reason for this team not preparing for a bowl game right now, it's the offense's inability to score. If I were any one of the Buffs' offensive eleven, I'd have a real tough time looking guys like Chidobe Awuzie and Rick Gamboa in the eyes in the locker room.

The defense played their hearts out this



Freshman QB Cade Apsay looks to evade a sack early in the fourth quarter of play at Folsom Field Nov. 13, 2015. (Nigel Amstock/CU Independent)

program sits, with a 4-9 season.

The biggest issue this year for the Buffs was that the offense failed repeatedly to put points on the board. Bad play calling, lack of execution — whatever we choose to attribute the struggles to, the offense was cursed with the inability to grab the bull by its horns, if you will. It's like having a Lamborghini but lacking the car keys. They were so close at times, but could never find the ways to win the games. And here we sit, mulling another classic Buffs season, clinging to whatever shreds of dignity and hope we have left.

And Jake has a point. The Buffs did play well against their non-Pac-12 opponents. That's a start, I guess. So it's unfair to call the offense a complete disaster. But I'm not happy

year. They certainly weren't perfect, but I recall many times where the defense fought desperately to keep the team in the game, only to see the offense fumble things up and give the ball right back to the enemy.

It's no secret that the defense spent an absurd amount of time on the field this season. If that isn't valiant, it's certainly commendable.

The offense had the talent, but couldn't finish the job. Congratulations to senior wide receiver Nelson Spruce, who's going to go down as the one of the best players in CU history. It's been so much fun watching him. I'd probably offer congratulations to a few other individuals on the offense, but individual accolades aren't to be given the same weight as games

won. The offense, despite impressive individual contributions, was not a success.

So I'm giving it a C-. The offense just could not execute. If I'm a professor handing out final grades, the Colorado offense is the slacker in my class who just managed to get a somewhat decent grade. Needs improvement.

JM:

Defense:

The defense seems to be an oxymoron of big plays with big yards given up. Case in point, Stanford's sophomore running back Christian McCaffrey was considered a Heisman candidate going into the match-up against CU. He was named a Heisman finalist, but the talk around him quieted after this game. He had some big plays, but he was fairly well contained other than that. That was the difference that the Buffs made. McCaffrey was a consistent player in every other game, but this game saw him only do good or bad things.

The defense's turnaround came with the help of a lot of players. Junior defensive back Chidobe Awuzie was used all around the defense. He was second on the team in tackles, with 84, also ending the season with four sacks. Kenneth Olugbode helped win the Rocky Mountain Showdown against CSU with a pick six. His performance in that game earned him Pac-12 player of the week. He finished the season with 67 tackles, good for fourth on the team. This is particularly impressive considering he missed two games and half of a third due to a leg injury.

The defense also caused a fair amount of turnovers. In 13 games, the team came down with 13 interceptions. Colorado also had a fumble recovered, good for 14 turnovers on the season. This sole recovery was returned for a touchdown. This is after having only three turnovers the season before.

Overall grade: B+

JG:

Defense

Can we really complain about the defense that much? I have a very sincere respect for the Buffaloes' defense. Despite injuries and facing tough opposition from their Pac-12 colleagues, overall, the defense did pretty well. Yeah, it wasn't good against the run. The secondary got burned fairly regularly. But let's not kid ourselves. The Colorado defense hasn't looked this solid in years.

Last year, the Buffs lost 56-28 to USC. This year they lost 27-24. In 2014, Oregon beat on the Buffs and won 44-10. This year, the game

was tied 17-17 at halftime. The defense proved that it could compete with the powerhouse offenses that make up the Pac-12 Conference. And although I'm sure no players would ad-

backer Addison Gillam had a season-ending surgery on his knee before the game against Oregon State back in October, Gamboa was tasked with a very large role. But he held his

own, and like Jake said, led the team in tackles this season.

Derek McCartney was great too. The defensive end was tied for the team lead with five sacks. I'm sure Head Coach Mike MacIntyre has high hopes of the sophomore after his impressive first collegiate season. I think that the secondary played well this year, too.

They did a good job

most of the time at containing the talented receiving core that makes up the Pac-12. Again, it certainly was not perfect or blameless, but give credit where credit is due.

I'm with Jake on this one, I'm saying B+.



A CU helmet is held up during kickoff Oct. 3, 2014. CU fell to Oregon 41-24. (Matt Sisneros/CU Independent)

mit it, I think fatigue crippled the defense this year. I'm not doubting the physical condition of these players, but they undoubtedly got worn down toward the ends of games.

There were a lot of individual guys that



Quarterback Sefo Liufau (13) consoles wide receiver Bryce Bobo after falling to UCLA in double overtime Oct. 25, 2014. (Nigel Amstock/CU Independent File)

stepped up this season. Freshman linebacker Rick Gamboa is first and foremost among them. When talented starting inside line-

Good job, defense. But please, football gods, no injuries in 2016. On both sides of the ball, for that matter.